

Translation

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT/JP2003/011606



PCT

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY
(Chapter II of the Patent Cooperation Treaty)

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference W005PCT	FOR FURTHER ACTION See Form PCT/IPEA/416	
International application No. PCT/JP2003/011606	International filing date (<i>day/month/year</i>) 11 September 2003 (11.09.2003)	Priority date (<i>day/month/year</i>) 05 November 2002 (05.11.2002)
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC D21C 11/04		
Applicant NIPPON RENSUI CO.		

1. This report is the international preliminary examination report, established by this International Preliminary Examining Authority under Article 35 and transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.
2. This REPORT consists of a total of <u>3</u> sheets, including this cover sheet.
3. This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, comprising:
a. <input type="checkbox"/> (<i>sent to the applicant and to the International Bureau</i>) a total of _____ sheets, as follows:
<input type="checkbox"/> sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis of this report and/or sheets containing rectifications authorized by this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions).
<input type="checkbox"/> sheets which supersede earlier sheets, but which this Authority considers contain an amendment that goes beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed, as indicated in item 4 of Box No. I and the Supplemental Box.
b. <input type="checkbox"/> (<i>sent to the International Bureau only</i>) a total of (indicate type and number of electronic carrier(s)) _____, containing a sequence listing and/or tables related thereto, in computer readable form only, as indicated in the Supplemental Box Relating to Sequence Listing (see Section 802 of the Administrative Instructions).
4. This report contains indications relating to the following items:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box No. I Basis of the report
<input type="checkbox"/> Box No. II Priority
<input type="checkbox"/> Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
<input type="checkbox"/> Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box No. V Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
<input type="checkbox"/> Box No. VI Certain documents cited
<input type="checkbox"/> Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application
<input type="checkbox"/> Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand 11 May 2004 (11.05.2004)	Date of completion of this report 06 September 2004 (06.09.2004)
Name and mailing address of the IPEA/JP	Authorized officer
Facsimile No.	Telephone No.

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY

International application No.

PCT/JP2003/011606

Box No. I Basis of the report

1. With regard to the language, this report is based on the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

This report is based on translations from the original language into the following language _____, which is language of a translation furnished for the purpose of:

international search (under Rules 12.3 and 23.1(b))
 publication of the international application (under Rule 12.4)
 international preliminary examination (under Rules 55.2 and/or 55.3)

2. With regard to the elements of the international application, this report is based on (replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report):

The international application as originally filed/furnished

the description:

pages _____, as originally filed/furnished

pages* _____ received by this Authority on _____

pages* _____ received by this Authority on _____

the claims:

pages _____, as originally filed/furnished

pages* _____, as amended (together with any statement) under Article 19

pages* _____ received by this Authority on _____

pages* _____ received by this Authority on _____

the drawings:

pages _____, as originally filed/furnished

pages* _____ received by this Authority on _____

pages* _____ received by this Authority on _____

a sequence listing and/or any related table(s) – see Supplemental Box Relating to Sequence Listing.

3. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

the description, pages _____
 the claims, Nos. _____
 the drawings, sheets/figs _____
 the sequence listing (specify): _____
 any table(s) related to sequence listing (specify): _____

4. This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments annexed to this report and listed below had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(c)).

the description, pages _____
 the claims, Nos. _____
 the drawings, sheets/figs _____
 the sequence listing (specify): _____
 any table(s) related to sequence listing (specify): _____

* If item 4 applies, some or all of those sheets may be marked "superseded."

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY

International application No.

PCT/JP03/11606

Box No. V Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Claim	1	YES
	Claims		NO
Inventive step (IS)	Claim	1	YES
	Claims		NO
Industrial applicability (IA)	Claim	1	YES
	Claims		NO

2. Citations and explanations (Rule 70.7)

Claim 1

Document 1 [US, 5980717, A (Eka Chemical AB)], which is the document considered most relevant, comprises a process for removing potassium ions by which potassium ions present in the collected ash recovered by a dust collector from a combustion gas discharged from a black liquor combustion step are adsorbed and removed. Further, document 2 [US, 5922171, A (Eco-tec Limited, et al.), discloses the collection of inorganic ions with an ion exchange material. In this sense, the invention of claim 1 of the subject application is identical to the inventions described in documents 1, 2. However, in the subject application, the ion exchange material is a filled layer of sodium-type cation exchange resin. Furthermore, the step comprises a regeneration step in which the cation exchange resin used in the potassium ion removal step is regenerated with an aqueous solution of caustic soda. Thus, the fractions rich with sodium sulfate and sodium carbonate that are recovered from the potassium ion removal step are circulated into the black liquor concentration step, and the discharged liquor containing caustic soda that was recovered in the regeneration step is reused in the bleaching step. Documents 1, 2 provide no description equivalent to the above-described steps and, therefore, the invention of claim 1 possesses novelty.

Further, according to the application, the accumulation of potassium impurities is prevented and the reagents used in the process can be employed effectively. Therefore, the invention appears to involve an inventive step.